

PREFERENCES FOR FAST FOOD ITEMS AMONG COLLEGE GOING STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The study explored the perceptions, preferences and factors that are contributing to the growth of fast food among people in Hyderabad. To meet these objectives this study helped in understanding what exactly a consumer looks for in choosing fast food. It gave an idea about the important factors that are required now a day to attract consumers in this competitive world. The study made an attempt to understand the consumer eating habits, what a consumer wants while eating fast food and their expectations and preferences. A questionnaire was prepared in order to conduct survey. Findings from the study indicated that the growth of fast food is perceived to be as a result of urbanization, lifestyle, people working for long hours, growing interest in exotic meals, advertising, availability of commercial buildings and rise in income. This study helped to identify the important factors perceived by consumers when choosing a food style. The price, atmosphere, food quality and location were the attributes most investigated by the researchers. The food quality and taste were perceived as essential by consumers for all types of fast food consumers. The study was aimed at knowing the various eating habits of a consumer. The questionnaire was based on different parameters to judge and understand the perception of consumer towards fast food and their preference for fast food. This project helped us to figure out the different consumer factors to Understand the overall consumer perception of eating fast food.

KEYWORDS: Fast Foods, Perception, Preferences, Consumption & Students

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INTRODUCTION

Food diversity in India is an unspoken characteristic of India's diversified culture consisting of different regions and states within. Traditionally, home-cooked meals were liked by the Indians – a concept was supported religiously as well as individually. However, with times due to growing awareness and influence of western culture, there is a modest shift in food consumption patterns among urban Indian families (Goyal and Singh, 2014). The results of these changes have modified the tradition of cooking and eating at home. People are now more hanging on ready-to-eat meals offered by businesses for their daily sustenance and popular among them are fast foods (Nondzor and Tawaih, 2015). The fast food Business is growing at active pace of over 20 per cent annually and most of the top chains are planning an aggressive expansion, not just in semi-urban India, but even in small towns (Rekha priyadharshini, 2017). Maybe also more eating moments per day are part of the modern

life-style which fits to the growing consumption of fast food (Hanson, 2002) which leads to rapid development of fast food industries (Park, 2004). Eating out gives consumers to satisfy their hunger, and need for convenience, pleasure, entertainment, time saving, social interaction and mood transformation (Park, 2004). Moreover, consumers derive benefits from food and restaurants, so people experience excitement, pleasure and a sense of personal well-being (Finkelstein, 1989; Park, 2004). From the reviews it was evident that students/young adults prefer fast food more than the middle-aged and old people. Hence the present study is taken up to know about the student's behavior towards fast food consumption, preferences and the influencing factors that are motivating towards consumption pattern and to know the perception of the students towards fast food.

METHODOLOGY

Exploratory research design was used for this study. Thirty college going girl students in the age group of 18 to 20 years were randomly selected as a sample. The data were collected using a structured questionnaire.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

All thirty students are doing undergraduate course and staying in the hostel and their pocket money ranged from 4000Rs. to 5000Rs. Out of which 2500Rs. was paid towards mess charges and room rent.

Suitable Time for Visiting Fast Food Center

Majority (80%) of the respondents visiting the fast food center during the evening hours, thirteen per cent of respondents preferred to visit the fast food centers in the afternoon time and around 7 per cent of respondents preferred to visit in the night.

Table 1: Suitable Time for Visiting Fast Food Center

n=30

Timing	Frequency	Percentage
Afternoon	4	13.3
Evening	24	80.0
Night	2	6.6

Persons Accompanying Fast Food Center

Table 2 shows that only 10 per cent of the respondents were accompanied by their families and 3.3 per cent with relatives. This table says most of the respondents used to go to fast food center with their friends i.e. 86.6 per cent of the respondents went with their friends.

Table 2: Persons Accompanying Fast Food Center

n=30

Relation	Frequency	Percentage
Family	3	10.0
Friends	26	86.6
Relatives	1	3.3
Alone	-	-

Frequency of Visiting Fast Food Center

Table 3 demonstrates that most of the respondents, 36.6 per cent visited fast food once in a week and once in a month respectively. 26.6 per cent respondents visited a fast food center once in a while.

Table 3: Frequency of Visiting Fast Food Center

n=30

Frequency	Frequency	Percentage
Once a week	11	36.6
Once a month	11	36.6
Once a while	8	26.6

Percentage of Amount of Income Spend on Fast Food

Table 4 shows that the majority of the respondents (60 %) had spent less than 10 per cent of their pocket money and 23 per cent of the respondents had spent less than 15 per cent on fast food and only few respondents i.e. 16.6 per cent had spent less than 15 per cent on fast food.

Table 4: Percentage of Amount of Income Spend on Fast Food

n=30

Percentage of Amount	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 10%	18	60.0
Less than 15%	7	23.3
More than 15%	5	16.6

Amount Spend at a Time Visiting Fast Food Centre

Around 67 per cent of respondents had spent less than 200 rupees on fast food, 20 per cent respondents had spent less than 500 rupees, 10 per cent respondents had spent less than 1000 rupees and only 3.3 per cent respondents had spent more than 1000 rupees on fast food at a visit.

Table 5: Amount Spend at a Time Visiting Fast Food Centre

n=30

Amount	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 200	20	66.6
Less than 500	6	20.0
Less than 1000	3	10.0
More than 1000	1	3.3

Food Joint and Reasons of Preference for Fast Food Item

Table 6 shows that 3 per cent of the respondents said that McDonalds and dominos were convenient to visit. Most of the respondents i.e. 40 per cent, 30 per cent and 23 per cent had visited McDonalds, dominos, pizza hut respectively due to the tasty food.

Most of the respondents consumed fast food from McDonald preferably as it is 2km away from their institution

Table 6: Food Joint and Reasons of Preference for Fast Food Item

n=30

Food Joint/ Reasons	Convenience		Pricing		Taste		Other	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Mc. Donald's	1	3.3	-	-	12	40	-	-
Pizza hut	-	-	-	-	7	23.3	-	-
Dominos	1	3.3	-	-	9	30	-	-
Venky's	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Reasons for Satisfaction

Table 7: Reasons for Satisfaction

n=30

Reasons	3 (FS)	2(PS)	1(US)	Total score	Rank
	15		15	60	3
• Pricing	9	15	6	63	2
• Ambience	13		17	56	5
• Wider menu	14		16	58	4
• Tastes better than home cooked					
• Saves time in food preparation	12		18	54	6
• Nutritious	1		29	32	9
• Clean environment	5		25	40	8
• Connected with people					
• Entertainment purpose	24		6	78	1
	1	20	9	52	7

Table 7 refers to the satisfactory preference of fast food. Respondents were asked to report 5 point continuum scale, i.e fully satisfied (3), partially satisfied (2) unsatisfied (1). Each point on the scale carried a score. These score values are shown here just to indicate the scoring pattern. Each statement was scored by 30 respondents on a 3 point scale. The maximum score earned was $30 \times 3 = 90$ i.e. fully agreed and minimum score earned on each statement was $30 \times 1 = 30$ i.e. strongly disagree. The most important reasons for satisfaction quoted by the respondents were getting connected with the people, good ambience and reasonable pricing.

The reasons quoted for less satisfaction were less nutritious and moderate clean environment.

Effective Promotional Activity for Fast Food Joint

Table 8 shows that only 16.6 percent of the respondents got motivated to buy fast food because of the discount, almost 50 percent of the respondents were comfortable with home delivery and nearly 33.3 percent respondents liked the special post made by the fast food centers.

Table 8: Effective Promotional Activity for Fast Food Joint

n=30

Promotional Activities	Frequency	Percentage
Discount	5	16.6
Home delivery	15	50.0
Other(special posts)	10	33.3

Source of Information about Fast Food

Majority of respondents were come to know about fast food through friends and 10 per cent of respondents through family members. Only three percent of respondents came to know about fast foods through advertisement and other sources.

Table 9: Source of Information about Fast Food

n=30

Source	Frequency	Percentage
Advertisement	1	3.3
Friends	25	83.3
Family members	3	10.0
Any other	1	3.3

Number of Items Ordered at a Time

Majority of the respondents (73.3 %) prefer to order one item at a time and 13.3 per cent of the respondents ordered either two items or three items at a time.

Table 10: Number of Items Ordered at a Time

n=30

Number of Items	Frequency	Percentage
One item	22	73.3
Two items	4	13.3
Three items	4	13.3
More than three items	-	-

CONCLUSIONS

Consumer approval of food served by fast food centers is critically important for the future growth of fast food outlets in any economy. The ranking of fast food outlets' attributes under study based on mean score is very high, but still consumer visits fast food centers for fun, change or entertaining their friends. It can be concluded that since all the sample is staying in hostel and having bland food, they are more motivated and preferred to have outside food i.e. in fast food joints. Thus a change in lifestyle, taste, good ambience and pricing are few motivating factors towards fast food consumption by the college going students.

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